

## Message Text

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41

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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P 161155Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4097  
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT SECRET

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR SS MR SP MO AG

SUBJECT: SAHARA WATCH: DESIRABILITY OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN  
DECOLONIZATION OF SPANISH SAHARA

REF: MADRID 4839I

1. SUMMARY: SEEN FROM OPTIC OF NOUAKCHOTT, PROPOSED DIRECT INVOLVEMENT OF U.S. IN SEARCH FOR RESOLUTION OF SPANISH SAHARA PROBLEM RAISES SERIOUS QUESTIONS. INTERVENTION BY U.S. AT THIS STAGE WOULD NOT APPEAR TO BE USEFUL IN TERMS OF SEARCH FOR DECOLONIZATION SOLUTION NOR DESIRABLE FROM POINT OF VIEW OF U.S. INTERESTS. GIVEN SERIES OF POLITICAL AND LEGAL ACTIVITIES NOW UNDERWAY, IT WOULD APPEAR PREFERABLE FOR U.S. TO HOLD OFF ON ANY DIRECT INTERVENTION IN SAHARA DISPUTE, EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR SERIES OF BILATERAL APPROACHES URGING ALL THOSE INVOLVED TO "COOL IT," AND ALLOW BEHIND-CLOSED-DOORS MANEUVERING NOW UNDERWAY TO BEAR FRUIT. END SUMMARY.

2. NUMBER OF KEY ELEMENTS OF SAHARA PROBLEM ARE ONLY DIMLY PERCEPTIBLE AT THIS STAGE. FACTS ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE ON SOME COMPLETED ACTIONS; OTHER RELEVANT ACTIVITIES ARE STILL UNDERWAY; STILL OTHERS ARE UPCOMING. WE DO NOT KNOW SCOPE OR TERMS OF REPORTED MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN "DEAL," OR INDEED IF DEAL WAS STRUCK. WHILE  
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SPANISH REPRESENTATIVES IN MADRID, ALGIERS, AND NOUAK-  
CHOTT HAVE ASSERTED KING AND BOUMEDIENE HAVE NOT IN FACT  
REACHED AGREEMENT, PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN MOROCCO AND  
ALGERIA AND U.S. REPORTING SUGGESTS TO CONTRARY.  
SAHARA PROCEEDINGS AT HAGUE COURT ARE STILL GOING ON,  
AND HANDING DOWN OF ADVISORY OPINION IS NOT EVEN  
PLANNED UNTIL EARLY FALL. MAURITANIAN-MOROCCAN EXPLANATORY  
MISSIONS IN AFRICA, ARAB WORLD, AND LATIN AMERICA ARE AT  
MID-POINT, AND WE DO NOT AS YET HAVE ANY FIRM INDICATION  
OF THEIR OUTCOME. WE ARE SKEPTICAL OF GIRM FOREIGN  
MINISTER OULD MOUKNASS' ASSERTION THAT AFRICAN CHIEFS  
OF STATE HAVE EXPRESSED COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF MAURI-  
TANIAN-MOROCCAN POSITION AND HAVE PLEDGED SUPPORT, BUT  
WE HAVE NO FACTS BEYOND ISOLATED EXAMPLES OF TOGO DE-  
CLARATION AND ZAIRE PRESENTATION TO INTERNATIONAL COURT.  
LAST MAJOR AREA OF UNCERTAINTY IS UPCOMING OAU MEETING.  
ACCORDING MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR TO MAURITANIA MAHJOUHI,  
WHO WAS WORKING-LEVEL CHAIRMAN OF RECENT OAU DECOLONI-  
ZATION COMMITTEE MEETING IN RABAT, SAHARA IS ON OAU AGENDA  
AS ONE OF SERIES DECOLONIZATION PROBLEMS. WHILE FOREIGN  
MINISTERS AND CHIEFS OF STATE MAY NOT TAKE ANY FORMAL  
ACTION ON SAHARA DISPUTE BEYOND URGING SPAIN TO GET OUT,  
FUTURE OF SAHARA WILL INEVITABLY BE MAJOR TOPIC OF IN-  
FORMAL COLLATERAL DISCUSSIONS AND CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS.  
IF OAU MEMBERS RUN TRUE TO FORM, MAURITANIANS AND  
MOROCCANS WILL BE ON RECEIVING END OF SOME VERY FRANK  
TALK ABOUT SELF-DETERMINATION AND OAU'S LONGSTANDING AND  
VIGOROUS OPPOSITION TO IRREDENTIST TENDENCIES TO AFRICAN  
TERRITORIAL DISPUTES. IMPACT OF SUCH TALK ON MAURITANIA  
AND MOROCCO IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT, BUT IT SEEMS CERTAIN  
THAT STRONG OAU SUPPORT AGAINST PARTITION WILL SATISFY  
LEAST AFFECT MAURITANIAN-MOROCCAN TACTICS.

3. LOOKING BACK OVER SERIES OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND  
PRIVATE COMMENTS BY GIRM OFFICIALS, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT  
MAURITANIANS ARE POINTING FOR UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND  
HAVE DEVISED THEIR POLITICAL TACTICS TO TAKE MAXIMUM  
ADVANTAGE OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON DECOLONIZATION  
OF SAHARA. DESPATCH OF THREE EXPLANATORY MISSIONS SUG-  
GESTS THAT GIRM HOPES THAT CHANCES OF OBTAINING  
GENERAL APPROVAL OF MAURITANIAN-MOROCCAN PARTITION OF  
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SAHARA ARE SIGNIFICANTLY BETTER IN UNGA THAN IN AOU IN  
VIEW OF (A) GREATER REPRESENTATION OF ARAB STATES, (B)  
PARTICIPATION OF NON-AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHO ARE LESS  
WEDDED TO ACCEPTANCE OF COLONIAL FRONTIERS, AND (C) IN-  
VOLVEMENT OF OTHER NATIONS WHOSE ONLY INTEREST IN SAHARA  
DISPUTE IS PROMOTING NONVIOLENT RESOLUTION. NEVER-

GHELSS, IT IS NOT CLEAR AT THIS POINT HOW GIRM SEES  
UNGA CONSIDERATION OF SAHARA PROBLEM EVOLVING BEYOND  
ACCEPTANCE OF ADVISORY OPINION RECORDING EXISTENCE  
MAURITANIANA-MOROCCAN HEGEMONY PRIOR ARRIVAL SPANISH.  
IT IS POSSIBLE THAT GIRM HAS BEEN TOO OCCUPIED WITH  
OTHER ASPECTS OF PROBLEM TO HAVE ADDRESSED QUESTION OF  
GA TACTNS IN ANY DETAIL AS YET.

4. SPANISH HAVE REPEATEDLY MADE THEIR INTENTION OF  
RESORTING TO UN KNOWN TO US, TO SYG, AND TO INTERESTED  
PUBLIC. AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT  
MAURITANIAN, MOROCCAN, OR ALGERIAN RESPONSE WILL BE TO  
SPANISH EFFORT TO SECURE UN SPONSORSHIP OF SAHARA CON-  
FERENCE. TO EXTENT GIRM SEES SPANISH MOVE AS ATTEMPT  
TO FORCE ISSUE, TO PREJUDGE RESULT, OR TO ESCAPE FROM  
CONTINUING TO MEET RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH SPAIN BEARS  
AS RESULT OF ITS YEARS OF PROFITTING FROM ITS POSITION  
AS COLONIZER, GIRM CAN BE EXPECTED TO REACT VIGOROUSLY  
AND NEGATIVELY, JUST AS IT DID TO SPAIN'S INITIAL AN-  
NOUNCEMENT OF ITS INTENTION TO PULL OUT IN NEXT FEW  
MONTHS (NOUAKCHOTT 1074). ON OTHER HAND, UN SPONSOR-  
SHIP IN GOOD TVHE OF CONFERENCE ON SAHARA MIGHT MEET  
WITH DIFFERENT REACTION. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH HAS  
ANNOUREBPUBLICLY THAT GIRM WILL NOT RPT NOT PARTICI-  
PATE IN FOUR-POWER CONFERENCE BUT DECLARATION WAS

NOTE: NOUAKCHOTT 1435 NOT PROCESSED, GARBLED. ELS

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NNN

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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